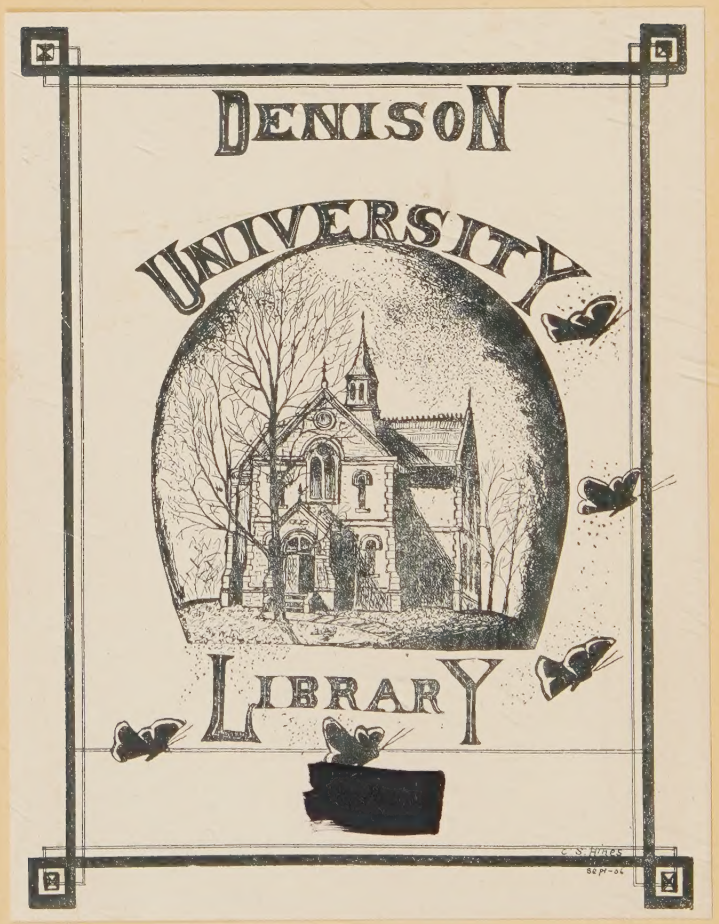
Origins of the Czechoslovak State

Thomas Capek, Jr.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ORIGINS OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK STATE

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By

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PREFACE

In this little volume the author outlines the origins of the Czechoslovak Republic with particular reference to the events surrounding the upheaval of 1918 in Central Europe. Documents and semi-official utterances are appended but there is no attempt to confine the text to primary sources; rather the current of opinion and actual forces at work are stressed.

Bohemia, which constitutes the nucleus of the present Czechoslovak Republic, is one of the oldest states in Central Europe. Her Hussite warriors fought the papal crusaders centuries before the French proletariat fought for Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. Yet the Czech heretics had attempted to solve practically the same issues and problems.

In 1527 Bohemia, Hungary and Austria formed a voluntary union from which emerged the pre-war empire of the Habsburgs. This union was a tragic mistake; and since the Battle of White Mountain (1620) when, rebelling against their oppressors, the Czechs lost whatever vestige of rights had remained to them, they have never ceased dreaming of the day when Bohemia might again be free and independent. Wilson, in his work The State,

said: "No lapse of time, no defeat of hopes, can reconcile the Czechs of Bohemia to incorporate with Austria." For a long time, the Czechs and their kinsmen the Slovaks were imbued with the spirit of Panslavism and looked toward the east—toward Russia—for liberation. Subsequent events, however, were to decide otherwise. With the World War came a fierce spirit of nationalism, exposing the inherent weakness of the Dual Empire. Guided by the voice of Wilson and of the leaders of the western democracies, the Czechoslovaks carried forward their own standards and laid the foundations of a new state.

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I

BEFORE THE WORLD WAR

COMING OF THE SLAV TO WESTERN EUROPE. The coming of the Slav to western Europe is obscured by the dim, aboriginal past. The seat of the Slav long before the Christian era had been between the rivers Odra (Oder) and Dnieper. Although there existed a certain unity between the tribes of this vast race as speaking practically the same language and practicing the same pagan rites, still there was no common center or ruler. Their country was wooded, to a great extent swampland, and far remote from any trade routes or contact with Mediterranean or Byzantine culture.

In the fourth century the Slav tribes, in search of warmer climates and giving way to the pressure of Tartar hordes, began their migration westward and southward. At the Elbe, strong Teutonic Nordics were encountered. On the south, the Slavs crossed the Carpathian Mountains, reached the Danube, and later the Adriatic Sea.

Some time in the fifth century, the Czechs and Slovaks established themselves in the region

they still occupy. It had formerly been settled by the Gallic Boji, hence the derivation of Bohemia. History tells us of Samo (627-652) their first ruler whose domains extended to the Danube River. In 870 under the leadership of Svatopluk was created the powerful but short-lived Moravian Empire.

At about this time the Magyars, a Turanian race, were pressing from the east into Europe. They abandoned nomadism for the rich fertility of the Danubian basin after pushing the Slovaks to the highlands of the Carpathians. With the coming of the Magyars ended the great racial movements affecting Central Europe. These frequent invasions of the warlike Magyars acted as an intrusive wedge into what otherwise would have been a solidly Slavic bloc, and separated these peoples into two branches: the northern, comprising the Czech, Slovak, Pole and Russian, and the southern or Jugoslav. The Moravian Empire fell, the region occupied by the Slovak was given over to the domination of the Magyar. Merged in the Hungarian Crown, the Slovaks ceased to exist in a political sense, henceforth sharing in common the glories and miseries of Hungary.

At the beginning of the ninth century, Bohemia was still largely pagan and German missionaries from Regensburg were endeavoring

to introduce Christianity. Under Charlemagne the church and the government had become allied into a powerful, medieval theocracy, the mission of which was to Christianize and Germanize.

Bohemia, a fertile and a new field, became the scene of a bitter religious controversy between the two rival civilizations represented by the Greek and Roman Churches. Innate distrust and antipathy to German influence was shown by the lack of success the Regensburg missionaries met with. Religious instruction was brought first to the Moravians and then to the Czechs from Byzantium by the Slav apostles Cyril and Methodius, who used the Bible in the vernacular. Reconciliation between the Churches becoming impossible, they separated, and with them the Slavs: the Russians and a great portion of the south Slavs being drawn into the fold of the Orthodox Church with its Græco-Slavonic ritual, while the Czechs, Slovaks, and Poles became subject to the Roman Catholic Church. Gradually the Slav liturgy and Cyrillic script were replaced by the Latin.

FORMATION OF AN INDEPENDENT STATE. Following the overthrow of the Moravian Empire, the Czechs reëstablished a strong state and in 1198 the German Emperor

Philip consented to the assumption of the title king, by Přemysl Otakar I. As an independent kingdom, Bohemia flourished until 1620, the date of the fateful battle of White Mountain.

Under Přemysl Otakar II (1253-1278) the Czechs tried to regain some of their lost glory and again extended their influence clear to the Adriatic Sea. But Rudolph, founder of the Habsburg dynasty, defeated Otakar and forced him to relinquish all his lands but Moravia and Bohemia.[1]

The fourteenth century marks the golden age of Czech history. Charles IV, their most famous king, showed great affection for the land he ruled, endeavoring in every way to promote the welfare and prestige of Bohemia. This ruler also became Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and made Prague the seat of his court and the political focus of Central Europe. In 1348 Charles IV gave his capital further distinction by the foundation of the University of Prague, the first school of higher learning of the German and Slav worlds. This university became the center of democratic thought and the vast movement which was to follow for the reformation of the church hierarchy.

Another of the early rulers always close to

[1] A later addition of Silesia established the territorial boundaries of the Czech Crown.

the hearts of Czech patriots is George of Poděbrad (1458-1471). As the only Hussite King of Bohemia, George tried, but ineffectually, to establish a true national dynasty.

FEDERATION OF BOHEMIA, HUNGARY AND AUSTRIA. The frequent inroads of the Turks into Central Europe at the beginning of the sixteenth century was causing consternation in the Christian countries. Already most of Hungary was overrun by these Moslem hordes. For centuries Austria (Oesterreich or Eastmark), because of her geographical position, had been the outpost against eastern invaders. The Huns, Avars, Magyars, Turks were each in turn encountered on the Danubian lowlands. King Louis, who occupied jointly the thrones of Hungary and Bohemia, was slain at the Battle of Mohacs while stemming the onslaughts of the Turk. Ferdinand of Austria looked to these empty thrones, having at one time made a pact with the reigning families of both Hungary and Bohemia that, in case of extinction of them, he should succeed. With their national existence threatened, Austria, Hungary and Bohemia, three independent states, by a decision of their estates in 1526, united in a free federation, each to retain unimpaired its powers of sovereignty and linked only by the person of the monarch.

When the menace of the Turk had ceased,

Bohemia and Hungary found themselves in a union which tended to destroy their national freedom. Ferdinand of Habsburg, the first ruler of this personal federation, absolute in spirit, German in nationality, and Catholic in religion, inaugurated a régime which his successors continued to the destruction of the Habsburg Empire.

RELIGIOUS WARS. The first reaction against the encroachments of the Germans in Bohemia and the prevailing ecclesiastical extortions, was manifested in the Peasants' Revolts in the fourteenth century. Primarily a protest against feudalism and its economic pressure, in Bohemia the revolts had a religious background, where heresy and nationalism was fast being linked in intimate association. The high clergy, largely alien, lived in opulence, while the peasants struggled with poverty. The Schism, during which rival pontiffs at Rome and Avignon each anathematized the other, caused thinking people to question the prestige of the Church.

It was at such a time that the critical attitude of Wyclif toward existing clerical abuses found its way into Bohemia and was taken up by John Hus (1369-1415), a rector at the University of Prague. Because of the marriage of Anne, daughter of the Czech king, to Richard II of England, Bohemia was in close touch with the

island kingdom. Jerome of Prague, a sincere friend of Hus', had studied at Oxford and carried to Prague the message of Wyclif. Hus became a preacher of wide popular influence, his doctrines being easily assimilated by the discontented Czech peasants. The leading dogma of his followers was expressed by a demand for communion in both kinds, bread and wine (Utraquism), as necessary for salvation.

Summoned before the papal council at Constance, Hus was declared a heretic and burnt at the stake on the 6th of July, 1415. Perhaps no nation possesses a greater lesson and inspiration than the simple teachings of this martyr. Hus believed that the clerical hierarchy was not divinely ordained nor was their word the sole source of authority. The freedom of individual conscience in viewing the Bible was above the interpretation of Rome. In Hus we see a significant anticipation of the Reformation which followed.

The immediate and inevitable result of the act of the papal council were the fierce Hussite Wars. These conflicts, which were of both a religious and political nature, reflected a certain individualism, Czech against German. Under the leadership of the blind Žižka, whose name was known over all Europe as a master of strategy and fortification, the Czechs defeated the Teutonic crusaders. The Church of

Rome, after sitting at the Council of Basle, declared for reconciliation and granted numerous concessions embodied in the Compacts of 1436.

Within the ranks of the Hussites was formed a party of extreme reformists known as Taborites, from the town of Tabor, which became their center. Their tenets tended toward the equalitarian beliefs of primitive Christianity. Internecine strife which followed gave victory to the moderate Hussites or, as they are sometimes called, the Calixtines.

From Hussitism sprang the Church of Bohemian (Moravian) Brethren or Unitas Fratrum. This fellowship retained as its doctrinal guide a personal faith in the Saviour. Its founder was Chelčický. Interpreting Christian love in its radical form of nonresistance to evil, Chelčický anticipated Tolstoy's famous doctrine of humility and discipline. Jan Amos Komenský, humanitarian, patriot and father of modern pedagogy, was the Brethren's last bishop, before the sect was crushed by the Catholic counter-reformation.[2]

The culmination of these religious disputes with their national background was the Thirty Years' War. The teachings of Luther began to revive interest in religion and by 1618 all of

[2] Since that time small groups of the Brethren immigrated to England, United States and other Protestant countries where they engaged in missionary work.

Bohemia, from her peasantry to her nobility, was Protestant. The Czechs rebelled, deposed the Habsburgs and chose Frederick of Palatinate, a Calvinist, who would, it was hoped, enjoy the support of his father-in-law, King James of England. This movement ended disastrously with the Battle of White Mountain, when the joint forces of the Catholic countries, Austria, Spain, Bavaria and Poland, defeated the Czechs. The Habsburgs took bloody vengeance. The leading rebels were executed, the native nobility had their land confiscated in favor of German, Spanish and Walloon adventurers, thousands of Protestant families had to seek refuge in Slovakia, Saxony and other countries. Jesuit fathers were invited to come to Bohemia and take charge of the University at Prague, from whence had emanated liberal and protestant thought since the time of Hus. Deprived of their national leaders, and with the peasants impoverished by the ravages of war, the Czech nation passed through a lacuna which seemed like death.

REVIVAL OF NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS. The Reformation had the effect of consolidating and strengthening the state at the expense of the church. Armies had been raised and put into the field to crush Protestantism. At the end of it all, the state was loath to part with the power it had acquired and hereafter

the church was merely to be used as an instrument to further dynastic designs.

In 1627 Ferdinand II recognized in the Amended Ordinance the existence of a separate Bohemian Kingdom, whose crown, however, was declared to be no longer elective but became hereditary in the House of Habsburg. The Czechs never acknowledged or accepted this encroachment on their historic rights; the constitutional change was considered illegal, though as a matter of fact no other course seemed possible but submission.

The eighteenth century was the age of Voltaire, Rousseau, Kant and Paine. The sceptical philosophy of that period subjected to scathing criticism both church and state. It fostered discontent with the established order of things and stirred up a desire for a change. Even the Habsburgs, seeped in absolutism, were swayed by the spirit of humanitarianism. Joseph II, son of Maria Theresa, ascended the throne as an "enlightened despot." Many reforms were effected that alleviated the condition of the people. In the Edict of Toleration of 1781 the right of free exercise of religion was granted. This did not, however, extend to the Bohemian Brethren, whose adherents had to join either the Lutheran or Calvinist Churches. Joseph, in his zeal for creating a homogeneous state, failed to recognize nation-

ality as a force, and did away with whatever local privileges were then exercised, centering the entire administration of his extensive domains at Vienna. In 1804 Francis I assumed the hereditary title of Emperor of Austria. In the year 1806 he resigned the crown of the Holy Roman Empire. This, in effect, was construed to mean that the Habsburgs had recognized the value of a unitary state.

The liberation of the American colonies from England, the French Revolution with its three cardinal principles of liberty, equality and fraternity, the effort of Napoleon to bring Europe under French control, each in turn gave encouragement to the rise of nationalism. The inevitable reaction that followed was reflected in the Congress of Vienna. Legitimacy and the restoration of the old order was its chief concern.

In Austria, the reactionary statesmanship of Metternich prevailed. Every expression of constitutional thought was stifled, every aspiration toward attainment of national rights by the many peoples inhabiting her heterogeneous domains was repressed. Police surveillance, espionage and vigilant censorship became the order of the day.

Hope of freedom might have been altogether lost but for a reawakening of national consciousness by a small group of intellectuals

who, by their fervid writings, sought to rekindle among the Czech and Slovak people the smoldering embers of native patriotism, to make them acquainted once more with the treasures of their literary past, their history and traditions. Such men were Dobrovský, patriarch of Slavic philology; Palacký, the historian; Jungmann, whose lexicon is to the Czech what Webster is to the English. The Slovaks produced the poet Kollár, who pictured the ascendancy of the Slav nations, and Šafařík, master of Slavic antiquity. Then there was the political organizer of the Czech nation, Rieger, and Havlíček, the publicist, and the Slovak patriots, Hurban, Hodža and Štúr. These men, stressing the ideal of nationalism and democracy, carried on a spiritual revival of their people, preparing them for the upheaval of 1848.

At the middle of the nineteenth century, the Habsburg Empire presented a loosely knit political unit, in no sense a nation-state. To the west were the Austrian duchies; to the east, Hungary; to the north, Bohemia; to the south, Lombardy-Venetia. The various component parts, each acutely conscious of its racial distinction, had nothing in common save allegiance to the emperor. The very existence of such a state was a challenge to the principle of nationality.

The news of the fall of Louis Philippe and the proclamation of a Second French Republic reached Prague February 29th. Overnight Metternich's elaborate and impenetrable system of police absolutism began to tumble to the ground. All Central Europe was in turmoil.

In an effort to relieve the tenseness of the situation, the Emperor, on April 8th, issued the Bohemian Charter which accorded old historic rights and promised future political autonomy. In the meanwhile the National Assembly at Frankfort demanded a unification of German states. The Czechs fearing annexation to a German *bund,* as a counter-move, summoned to Prague a Slav Congress. But the aspirations to introduce political democracy, conceived with but little idea as to common aims and interests, proved of short interlude; the revolution was suppressed alike in Vienna, Budapest and Prague.

The system of Metternich was reëstablished under Bach. The government decided that Josephinism must go, and concluded a Concordat with the Pope in 1855. This declared Roman Catholic worship privileged and put the educational and ecclesiastical affairs of the empire in the hands of the Holy See.[3]

To the Czechs, the abortive rising of 1848

[3] Various enactments passed in 1868 and 1874 did away with the gains of the church under the Concordat.

brought no relief. One thing, however, had been accomplished, the people aroused from their lethargy had become infused with a rebellious spirit.

AUSTRIA'S COMPROMISE WITH THE MAGYARS. Defeat on the battlefields of Italy in 1859 and the expulsion from the German Confederation in 1866 brought about a crisis never before experienced. The rôle of the Habsburgs as chief promoters of Germandom had apparently ended. Political bankruptcy, military disaster, the government discredited both at home and abroad, all necessitated a radical change of course. The Austrian Monarchy, essentially a product of five centuries of dynastic policy, in which conquest, marriage, a persistent and rusé diplomacy played no minor part, lacked the homogeneity of France or the national unity which her neighbor Germany was bringing about; instead, a huge, medieval, cosmopolitan empire.

Three ways were suggested to Emperor Francis Joseph to save his monarchy from a threat of disruption: centralism, federalism, dualism. The first had been carried out to its logical completeness under Joseph II and Francis I and was considered as of the past. Federalism, demanded by the Slavs, seemed a means of obtaining political justice. The Germans and the Magyars, on the other hand,

asked for dualism, for this would avert a Slavic majority.

The revolutionary movement of 1848 had gained considerable impetus in Hungary. Under the fervid leadership of Kossuth, the Magyars had put an army into the field and proclaimed their separation from Vienna. But their practice of forcible assimilation of subject races within their borders caused the Slovaks, Rumanians and South Slavs alike to view the movement with distrust and antipathy and wherever possible coalesce with the dynasty.

The Magyars were watching the military reverses of the Habsburgs with cold indifference, if not satisfaction. Austria's distress was Hungary's opportunity. To Beust, the Austrian Chancellor, fell the task of negotiating with the Magyars. The problem before them was treated as a *machtfrage,* the Austrians too weak to oppose the Prussians in the face of Magyar enmity, the Magyars sensing the occasion as one which would lead to greater independence and hence greater freedom to denationalize her non-Magyar population. The Czechs were not asked to coöperate although the position of Bohemia was analogous to that of Hungary. The historical rights of the two countries were identical, the Habsburgs having derived glory and power from both these

crowns. Prior to 1804 there existed no such person as an Emperor of Austria; it was the Archduke of Austria, the King of Bohemia, and the King of Hungary.

Dualism contemplated a division of political influence into two spheres: the German minority was to exercise hegemony in Austria, and the Magyar minority was to be dominant in Hungary. It represented the old principle of *divide et impera.*

Submerged for centuries, the Slovaks showed evidence of a national consciousness concurrently with the Czechs. This brought upon them the vengeance of the Magyars, even of the Liberal Party, to whom freedom meant freedom for the Magyars only. After the conclusion of the Compromise of 1867, the political outlook of the ruling class in Hungary became more astigmatized and the process of Magyarization took added impetus. The unfortunate Slovak, until the day of his liberation, remained isolated, held in contempt, and denied parliamentary representation.

STRUGGLE FOR CONSTITUTIONAL PRIVILEGES. The Czechs, politically shackled by Schmerling's infamous electoral law, deprived even of a majority in their own local Diet, could do nothing except record a protest against the Compromise. This was formally done by the memorable "Declaration"

of national and political rights. Vienna answered this opposition in the old way she knew best—repression.

When, on January 18, 1871, the victorious King of Prussia proclaimed himself Emperor of Germany at Versailles, Austria perceived she must change her mad course. Ejected from the German Confederation for good, she was compelled to move her center of gravity toward the Slavic south, and a fortnight later Count Hohenwart was charged with the formation of a cabinet essentially federalistic and conciliatory to the Czechs. The Emperor sent to the Diet at Prague a Rescript acknowledging the legal position of the Crown of Bohemia. The Fundamental Articles of October 1871 were drawn up whereby Bohemia was to enter into a trialistic system with Hungary and Austria. Never had the Czechs been so near realization of their legitimate demands as then. But, in the meanwhile, Beust and Andrassy convinced Francis Joseph that the Articles would break up his Empire. These were therefore revoked and Count Hohenwart, made the scapegoat, was forced to resign.

In an effort to impress the government, the Czech deputies had absented themselves from the Reichsrat since 1863, and from the Diet since 1867. This policy of abstention failed, and in 1879 the deputies returned to pursue dif-

ferent tactics. Every opportunity was seized to obstruct the work of the Diet and Reichsrat until some concession or compromise was effected, and step by step the Czechs drove the German minority from their privileged positions. This resumption of parliamentary life had taken place during the ministry of Count Taaffe. The Czechs were persuaded to take the usual oath required, but did so with a reservation that it would be without prejudice to state rights.

The agreement between Count Taaffe and the Czech deputies had been backed by the Old Czech Party, representing the feudal and clerical elements, which held leadership during the early phases of the renewed political activity. They soon gave way to the Young Czech Party. Opportunist, bargaining with each successive ministry, the Young Czechs at the same time carried on an unceasing nationalist propaganda.

In the nineties of the past century was started a radical movement in the formation of the Omladina, a secret society whose avowed purpose was to arouse the young generation by means of popular meetings and anti-dynastic demonstrations. This organization was suppressed by the government, its leaders punished after a mass trial in Prague.[4] While

[4] Among others the late Finance Minister, Dr. Rašín.

comparatively an unimportant episode in the history of the Czech struggle for independence, it nevertheless reflected the temper of a people who realize the futility of coöperation with Vienna. The golden legend of a benevolent Austria with its much tried Emperor, and of a chivalrous, liberty-loving Hungary, was one intended for foreign consumption only.

A new question was injected into the political sphere in 1907 when, due to the rise of socialism and the far-reaching influence of the Russian revolutionary movement of 1905, general manhood suffrage was adopted in Austria. More than ever, were the Czechs now able to voice their objections. Several political parties gained strength: the Agrarian, Social Democrats, Young Czechs, and the National Socialists, represented the demands of the nation, based upon the historic rights of their country.

By 1914 the Czechs were politically more mature, better organized, and more insistent than ever for an equal participation in government activities with the Austrians and the Magyars. Economically, the lands of the Czech Crown had become the richest section of the Dual Empire.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY ON THE EVE OF WAR. The general impression one gets in following the vicissitudes of the Dual Empire for the past decade is one of failure of both her

internal and foreign policy. Sundered by race divisions and jealousies, political debacle, treasury impoverished, domination by Prussia, a widening breach between Vienna and Budapest, were all elements which could not be denied.

While Austria-Hungary had been searching for national cohesion, Bismarck was successfully bringing about the unification of Germany. A swift war upon flimsy pretext against the Habsburgs gave Bismarck opportunity to dislodge Emperor Francis Joseph from his long-exerted dominance in German affairs. At the Treaty of Berlin, in 1878, in which Prussia played the leading part, Bismarck won over Austria-Hungary to his cause by granting her the administration of Bosnia-Herzegovina, whose people were of Serbo-Croatian origin.

Once unified on a national basis, Germany embarked upon a most strenuous policy of imperialism. From the time of Fichte and Hegel, offering a background for the historical school, German thought was dominated by a utilitarian doctrine of a super-state. Treitschke was its historian; the orientalist and economist List and Paul de Legarde evolved modern Pangermanism.

German influence was to be extended eastward, across the center of Europe and beyond the Mediterranean into the heart of Asia. This

phase of imperialism, frankly expounded by Friedrich Naumann, can be crystallized into the phrase, Berlin to Bagdad. Austria, a mere pawn in this scheme, was to be pushed toward the Balkans, a link between the east and the west, Andrassy was won over, Turkey was buttressed by German capital and the military. The plan rejected the solidarity of nations. The racial and political units over which German influence found its way were to be bound together and so kept by stress of economic treaties, dynastic ties, and force of arms.

Antagonized to German ambitions was Russia, seeking an ice-free outlet for her products. The clashing zone became the Balkans. Austria-Hungary was to hold down the *status quo* while Germany completed her economic and political expansion eastward. The feverish state of affairs in the Balkans during the last decade, considered endemic, was largely the outcome of German and Russian intrigue.

The Congress of Berlin recognized Serbia as an independent kingdom. Austrian policy was to make paramount her influence at the Belgrade court. In 1903, in consequence of a palace revolution, King Peter, vigorous nationalist, ascended the throne. In growing Serbia, Austria saw a twofold menace: first, a formidable barrier to the Austro-German push into Balkan territory; and secondly, the specter of

a pan-Slavist movement which would alienate the South Slavs from the Empire.

In 1908 there was instituted the Zagreb (Agram) High Treason Trial. Not without reason, the Austro-Hungarian Government suspected that much of the agitation in the empire was being fostered by Serbia. In seeking to repress the national aspirations of her Serbo-Croat subjects and at the same time give her *casus belli,* evidence was offered in way of numerous and lengthy documents, making it appear that official Serbia was maintaining separatist propaganda in Croatia. A noted Austrian historian, Professor Friedjung, came forward with the incriminating documents. But at the trial, it was proved and later acknowledged by Friedjung, that the papers had been deliberately forged in the offices of the Austro-Hungarian legation at Belgrade under the direction of Count Forgach, secretary.

When the Balkan Wars disturbed the peace of Europe, Francis Joseph and Emperor Wilhelm looked on, hoping the Turk would be victorious. But when Serbia emerged from the conflict doubled in area, Austrian fears of a pan-Serbian movement increased. At least, to prevent Serbia from gaining an Adriatic port, Austria urged the erection of the autonomous principality of Albania, with the German prince Wied as ruler.

On June 28, 1914, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the Habsburg throne, and his morganatic wife, Duchess of Hohenberg, while on an official visit to Sarajevo, capital of Bosnia, were assassinated by Serbian terrorists. The plot was alleged to have been prepared in connivance with Belgrade officials. Austria sent a peremptory ultimatum to Serbia and received an unsatisfactory answer. A sufficient pretext gave the war party at Vienna the opportunity it had long been awaiting.

II

INDEPENDENCE REALIZED

CZECHOSLOVAKS DURING THE EARLY STAGES OF THE WAR. The sudden outbreak of the World War found the leaders of the Czechoslovak nation unprepared for revolutionary action. Their efforts had been directed in struggling for constitutional reform; only a very few were internationally minded. Even, after war had been declared, it was believed that Austria was merely trying to humiliate Serbia by a display of military power and that if a conflict were to take place, it would be of punitive nature, localized.

The Reichsrat becoming unworkable, had been prorogued by the Emperor before declaration of war and not again convoked until 1917. The Budapest Parliament assembled upon a superannuated franchise continued in session, entirely dominated by Magyar deputies, who enthusiastically endorsed the war policy of their government. Political expression by the subject races in Hungary was wholly repressed. Count Stephan Tisza, Premier and Hungary's "strong man," favored diplomatic

pressure over Serbia, until it was certain that Germany would back her partner, then Tisza became the very bulwark of an uncompromising struggle to the end.

The Czechs, some openly, others secretly, espoused the cause of the Allies, the whole nation realizing that a victory for the Central Powers would end all hopes of autonomy or independence. By reason of the fact that Bohemia borders on Germany, open revolt would have brought German troops in a short time and caused needless sacrifice. Austria's policy of coercion was met by passive resistance, which, when carried on by a nation as a whole and in coöperation with other subject nationalities, eventually caused the disintegration of the Monarchy.

Fortunately, there was little diversion in the plans offered by national leaders to conduct the movement for liberation. Kramář, protagonist of the school of neo-Slavism, looked to Russia, but after the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, fell in with the views of Masaryk who followed the political gospel of democracy found in France, England and the United States. Masaryk had always doubted the strength of Russia and her sincerity toward non-Orthodox Slavs.

Several representatives of the Czechoslovaks, among them Masaryk, had succeeded in escap-

ing abroad. It was their mission to make known to the Allied statesmen that Austria-Hungary must share the guilt of the war together with Germany. At Zurich, on July 4, 1915, upon the occasion of the five hundredth anniversary of the burning of Jan Hus, Masaryk publicly identified himself as leader of the Czechoslovak cause.

At home a veritable reign of terror, with military executions and arbitrary imprisonments was carried on to intimidate and break the will of the people. Political spokesmen like Kramář, Klofáč, Soukup, Scheiner and Rašín, there being no parliamentary immunity, were called to answer charges of treason in the latter part of 1915. But the sentiments of these men merely reëchoed those of the whole nation, and the government was powerless to indict the nation for treason. Czech and Slovak newspapers had to suspend publication under threat of confiscation.

The conduct of the Czech conscripts in the Austrian armies was a cause of further persecution of the nation. Whenever opportunity afforded they went over to their brother Slavs, the Russians and Serbians. Many divisions of the Austrian Army were totally disorganized, and to prevent further *en masse* surrenders, the Czech soldiers were transferred to German and Magyar regiments. In the meanwhile,

units of Czechs and Slovaks were formed in friendly countries and gave assistance on all fronts to the Allied cause.[1]

CZECHOSLOVAK LEGIONS IN RUSSIA. The story of the adventure of the Czechoslovak Army in Russia reads like another epic Anabasis. Early in the year 1915, the Russians advanced into Galicia, driving the Austro-Hungarian forces before them. This gave the Czech recruits an opportunity to allow themselves to be "captured" in large numbers. They formed into distinct units and turned to fight their former oppressors. But it was not until Masaryk's arrival in the spring of 1917, that these regiments were consolidated to most effective advantage, particularly distinguishing themselves at Zborov in July of that year. When the shameful Treaty of Brest-Litovsk (March, 1918) was signed and Russia withdrew from the war, the Czechoslovak Army, then consisting of some forty thousand men, was centered near Kiev. As the Austrian and German armies under Linsingen advanced toward that town, the position of the Czechoslovaks became precarious. They then negotiated and received permission from Trotsky to move across Siberia for the purpose of joining Czechoslovak forces on the western front. At

[1] On December 16, 1917, France decreed the formation of Czechoslovak army units. On April 21, 1918, Italy did likewise, followed by Great Britain on June 3, 1918. Pages 58, 59, post.

first, and after a proclamation of neutrality in Russian affairs, relations with the Soviet Government were friendly, but later the Soviet, under the pressure of the Germans and by reason of their own interrupted lines of communication and confused instructions, countermanded permission and ordered the Czechoslovaks to disarm. To avoid being turned back to the Central Powers and be treated as deserters, the Czechoslovaks began a seemingly impossible journey along the Trans-Siberian railroad toward Vladivostok, a distance of several thousand miles. They occupied Samara, Omsk, Irkutsk, Chita and other Siberian towns, en route, acting as the strongest tactical unit which the Allies had in that distracted country. In the meantime, other detachments centered in western Siberia began to work their way up from Cheliabinsk via Ekaterinburg toward Vologda and Archangelsk. Practically for the entire distance these troops were forced to battle the Red Guards and organized bands of German and Magyar prisoners. A strict discipline was observed, which won the confidence of the Russian peasants, and it was this support that enabled them to finally reach Vladivostok and give to the world an account of their almost legendary exploits.

The situation created one of the anomalies of the war; a new nation born, with its army

in Siberia, its Provisional Government at Paris, its people at home still under the heel of Austrian terrorism, yet a nation firmly established in spirit.

ACTIVE EFFORTS FOR INDEPENDENCE. On May 30, 1917, after a lapse of three years' parliamentary activity, Emperor Charles, succeeding his aged grand-uncle, Francis Joseph, who, toward the close of his long and stormy life, reigned by the sheer effect of an imperial dignity, was compelled to reopen the Reichsrat. The reasons were obvious. Mutterings of a great social upheaval in Russia had already their effect upon the war-weary people. Furthermore, the Allies in their statement of war aims early in 1917 had included in their program the liberation from foreign domination of the Slavs, Rumanians, Italians and Czechoslovaks.[2] The very integrity of the Empire was threatened by forces both from within and without. Emperor Charles had to seek a new orientation; Baron Burian was dismissed, the reactionary Count Tisza was asked to resign from his premiership in Hungary in favor of Andrassy, and the Reichsrat was called to reëstablish constitutional government.[3] Com-

[2] Page 43, post.

[3] The indefinite proroguing of the Reichsrat had been considered as a concession to the Magyars, fearful of the nationalist demonstrations the Czech and Jugoslav deputies would create and which would obviously react against the integrity of their own heterogeneous lands.

promise, if sought, even then would not have been impossible, as at that time the monarchy still enjoyed some prestige of success and there was no certainty that the Allies would be victorious.

The Czech deputies representing all parties, had coalesced in 1916 into a Czech Parliamentary Union, pledged to unified action. No longer satisfied with autonomy, they now demanded that the monarchy be transformed into a federated union of free and equal national states. In this single heartedness and courage of convictions lay the solidarity of the future Czechoslovak State. Other national groups within the Empire took example and reorganized into their respective parliamentary "clubs." At Prague a National Committee, at first informal, later, on a strict all-party basis under the direction of Kramář, was formed to coöperate with the Union at Vienna and the Council at Paris.

Upon entering the Reichsrat, Deputy Staněk, as President of the Czech Parliamentary Union, made the first of a series of memorable pronouncements for federalism.[4] The Government became an object of a virulent attack of long pent-up emotions, which threats and terrorism could not subdue. A month later Emperor Charles as a matter of political ex-

[4] Appendix document No. 1.

pediency granted an amnesty to political prisoners. Kramář, having been among those incarcerated, was now able after his release, to assume leadership of the Czechoslovak cause at home. Masaryk, in the meanwhile, had, through his acquaintance with Wickham Steed and Seton-Watson and others, exerted influence upon a strong inter-parliamentary group in England. Štefánik and Beneš did likewise in France. On November 14, 1915, a manifesto was issued in Paris, London, Petrograd and Washington, the opening declaration of the Czechoslovak revolutionary body abroad. A National Council had established headquarters in Paris with branches in Entente countries, and an official journal, *La Nation Tchèque*, edited in Paris under the direction of Ernest Denis. Companion journals in Russia, England and America helped carry on the work of propaganda. A Mafia, or secret revolutionary society in Prague, kept Masaryk and Beneš informed as to conditions at home and often forewarned them of important moves in Vienna. The Czechoslovak revolution represents a most carefully planned and faithfully executed act of an entire nation, fortunate to be led by men with moral courage, unselfishness of spirit and latitude of vision.

Events leading to the disintegration of the Dual Monarchy began to follow quickly. As

the plans of the subject nationalities matured and as the Allied nations now granted substantial assistance, the distress of the Habsburgs became more apparent.

In the summer of 1917 Czech delegates sitting at the International Conference of Socialists at Stockholm came forward with demands for a federal union of the Austro-Hungarian states. Although this attempt to hold an international peace conference proved abortive when the leading Entente governments refused passports to their delegates, still it represented an appeal to the world by delegates from the lands of the Bohemian Crown who were not able to voice their opinions three years previous when the great conflict arose.

As time went on, the spirit of the Czech nation became less amenable; independence was sought. After a manifestation of unanimity at an all-Constituent Assembly of Deputies held at Prague on January 6, 1918, a later Congress of representatives of oppressed nationalities of Austria-Hungary met in Rome the following April under the auspices of the Italian Government.[5] It was most significant that the Italian capital should be chosen, as it was from there that the chief obstacles to the emancipation of the Habsburg Slavs arose.

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[5] Appendix document No. 3.

This Congress, composed of Italians, Czechoslovaks, Poles, Rumanians and Jugoslavs, declared the right of every people to complete independence and the necessity of unified action against their common oppressor. It might be said that here is found the turning point in the Revolution, when the Habsburgs sensed their downfall and the subject nationalities their potential strength. A special Polish memorandum, their first definite pronouncement against the Monarchy was submitted. Also a special Jugoslav-Italian pact pledged observance of declaration of Corfu as well as approached an amicable basis for discussion of the vexing questions brought up by the London Conference of 1915.[6] That the Rome Congress had the favor of the United States was evinced by the words of Secretary Lansing, who declared on May 29th that "the nationalistic aspirations of the Czechoslovaks and Jugoslavs for freedom have the earnest sympathy of this government," and that the significance of the Congress and Lansing's statement had not escaped the Allies, was brought up during the Inter-Allied War Council held at Versailles on June 3d, which "noted with satisfaction the statement of the American Secretary of

[6] Declaration of Corfu signed on July 20, 1917, by Pašić representing the Serbian Government and Trumbić of the Jugoslav National Committee consummating Serb unification under the Karageorgević dynasty.

State." In order to make more plain to official Austria-Hungary, just what he meant, Lansing issued a new statement on June 28th further announcing the position of the United States Government to be "that all branches of the Slav race should be completely freed from German and Austrian rule."

PROPOSALS OF PEACE AND THEIR ANSWERS. The second year of the war saw the launching of several proposals tending toward ending the conflict. In considering the attitude of the Allied Powers toward Austria-Hungary and her subject nationalities, one is at a loss to discover any coherent or harmonious policy. All energy and thought was directed against Germany and consequently the problem of the Dual Empire was left more or less to circumstances, the poison already at work, to take its natural course. Entertaining the hope of detaching Austria-Hungary and Germany and assuming the *status quo ante* of the Dual Empire as a political entity to be dealt with after the war, represented one of the ill-advised phases of international policy.

Feeling that they had reached the height of their power, Germany and her allies issued an identic note on December 12, 1916, to the neutral countries proposing a conference to discuss peace. The Allies treated the peace offensive

as a political maneuver and refused to open negotiations.

At this same time President Wilson had under consideration a proposition which would bring the belligerent nations into an exchange of war aims, to discover if any basis of peace might be found. In a note, dated December 18, 1916, the belligerents were asked to make an avowal of their respective views as to the terms upon which war might be concluded. The Central Powers replied on December 26th that they were ready to meet their antagonists in some neutral country at a peace conference. The Allied reply was communicated January 10, 1917; it contained specific insertion of the Czechoslovaks. Among other declarations of war purposes, there was stated "the liberation of Italians, Slavs, Rumanians and Czechoslovaks from foreign domination." The word "Slavs," studiously vague, undoubtedly meant Jugoslavs. Similarly the term "liberation" was ambiguous of definition, but the insertion of these words nevertheless gave proof of the successful efforts of Masaryk, Beneš and Štefánik among the Allied statesmen.

In August, 1917, Pope Benedict XV addressed an appeal to all belligerent powers, making certain suggestions as a basis for a just peace. Although solicitude was shown for the Polish question, no mention was made of either

the Czechoslovaks or the Jugoslavs. When we consider the long friendship of the Habsburgs and the Vatican and the fact that this royal house is representative of the last great Catholic power, one is tempted to give credence to the rumor that Vatican officials close in touch with Emperor Charles were consulted before the note was drawn up. On the whole, the Pope's effort toward peace was barren of results and rather lent itself to much adverse criticism.

The Allies were reluctant to commit themselves fully on the Central European situation. During a general discussion in the House of Commons on how the Austro-Hungarian problem should be dealt with after the signing of the Pact of Corfu, Mr. Balfour, Foreign Secretary, expressed the British attitude when he said: "What we desire, of course, is that the nationalities composing that heterogeneous state should be allowed to develop on their own lines, carrying out their own civilization, and determine the course in which their development should take place. . . . How that end is to be approached exactly; how you are going to deal with such a great and ancient monarchy as Austria; how Austria and Germany are going to deal with their own internal problems which they must settle, not anyone else, nobody can effectively discuss these questions across

the floor of the House and the present stage of the War."

The United States had been at war with Germany since April 6, 1917, while it did not declare war against Austria-Hungary until the following December 7th.[7] In asking Congress to declare hostilities Wilson stated: "We owe it to ourselves, however, to say that we do not work to impair or rearrange the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It is no affair of ours, what they do with their own life, either individually or politically. We do not purpose to dictate to them in any way. We only desire to see that their affairs are left in their own hands, in all matters great and small."

With the victory of the working class in Russia, labor parties of the Allied countries began to demand more influential force in the settlement of war questions. The British Labor Party, through its Secretary, Mr. Arthur Henderson, issued on December 17, 1917, a comprehensive Memorandum of war aims. The principle of self-determination was stressed but no specific mention was made of any people to whom it might apply.[8] This

[7] In the Senate the Joint Resolution was unanimously passed. In the House, Mr. London, Socialist from New York, registered a contrary vote. For a general discussion on the declaration of war with Austria-Hungary, see Congressional Record, 65th Congress, 2d Session, December 7, 1918.

[8] It was during the discussion on December 28th of the Labor Memo that we get a further insight into the prevailing British

document was subsequently used as a basis for securing an agreement with corresponding bodies in other Allied countries. After a consultation with labor leaders, Lloyd George gave the government's attitude in the most specific terms, clarifying the points that must still be fought out before peace could come. This official exposé of war purposes was given on January 5, 1918, before the delegates of the Trade Unions and contained the following paragraph: "Similarly, though we agree with President Wilson that the break-up of Austria-Hungary is no part of our war aims, we feel that unless genuine self-government on true democratic principles is granted to those Austro-Hungarian nationalities who have long desired it, it is impossible to hope for the removal of those causes of unrest in that part of Europe which has so long threatened its general peace." These references to Austria-Hungary authoritatively defined the Allied formula of 1917; it was autonomy, not independence of peoples that was sponsored.

At the Inter-Allied Labor and Socialist Conference held in London on February 20th the recent British Memorandum having served as

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viewpoint upon Austria-Hungary. Mr. M. H. Thomas M. P., took occasion to correct Mr. Henderson on the question of separate peace with Austria-Hungary. "It is vital," said Mr. Thomas, "that when peace is made, it would be a world peace, not a separate peace between individual nations."

a guide, a substantial agreement of war aims was reached between delegates from the principal Allied nations, including representatives of Czechoslovak Socialists in America, Polish and Jugoslav groups, and British labor. "The conference does not propose as a war aim dismemberment of Austria-Hungary or its deprivation of an economic access to the sea. On the other hand, the Conference cannot admit that the claims to independence made by the Czechoslovaks and the Jugoslavs must be regarded merely as questions for internal decision. National independence ought to be accorded, according to the rules to be laid down by the League of Nations, to all such peoples as demand it, and these communities ought to have the opportunity of determining their own groupings and federations according to their affinities and interests. If they think fit, they are free to substitute a free federation of Danubian States for the Austro-Hungarian Empire."[9]

The labor parties in America, due to their cosmopolite makeup could never offer as vigorous and definite pronouncement of war aims as the British. On September 6, 1917, a congress was held at Minneapolis by the American Al-

[9] A subsequent Inter-Allied Labor and Socialist Conference met in London, September 17, 1918, at which the American Federation of Labor was represented, President Wilson's Fourteen Points were accepted.

liance for Labor and Democracy, which body was representative of the leading labor associations in the United States. In their resolution on war aims they came out for a recognition of the rights and liberties of small nations and for the principle that no people be ruled by a sovereignty under which it did not wish to live. At the Convention of the American Federation of Labor held in Buffalo the following November 12th, the same resolution was put forward.

Quite unexpectedly Wilson's position of noninterference shifted when he demanded under Point X of his classic Fourteen Point speech that "the peoples of Austria-Hungary whose place among nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunities for autonomous development." Wilson from this time on held tenaciously to his cause and became the champion of the rights of small nations. Together with Lloyd George's similar utterances, the war aims of the Allies were now clearly put forward and consolidated their moral position before the world. These remained the text in modified form around which peace discussions at Versailles were drafted. Minister Czernin in answering the Fourteen Points said in his note on January 24, 1918, that he "rejects any advice as to how we are to govern ourselves."

In an address to Congress on February 11th, President Wilson, after traversing the arguments of the German and Austro-Hungarian answers, laid down four further general principles by which proposals of peace were to be tested. These were prefaced by the significant words, "self-determination is not a mere phrase. It is an imperative principle of action which statesmen will henceforth ignore at their peril." In his Fourth Point, he said: "That all well defined national aspirations shall be accorded the utmost satisfaction that can be accorded them without introducing new or perpetuating old elements of discord and antagonism that would likely in time break the peace of Europe and consequently the world." This truism, although limited in its application, pointed directly at the races ruled without their consent by the Habsburgs, and which step by step were gaining sympathy for their cause.

Then in April, 1918, Clemenceau made the startling disclosure that Austria-Hungary in an endeavor to assure herself territorial integrity had been secretly intriguing for a separate peace since March of the previous year, through the intermediary of Prince Sixtus of Bourbon-Parma, a brother-in-law of Emperor Charles. This gross breach of faith on the part of her ally, prompted Germany on May 12th to bring Emperor Charles into a formal

understanding practically making him a vassal of Emperor Wilhelm. On April 2d, Count Czernin speaking before the Vienna Municipal Council gave an exhibition of a desperate anti-Slav militancy berating the traitors to the Empire, who "find no word of blame for the Czech troops, which criminally fight against their own country and their brothers in arms; would tear parts out of the Hungarian State, under protection of their parliamentary immunity; would make speeches which cannot be construed otherwise than as a call to enemy countries to continue the struggle, solely in order to support their political efforts; and ever anew kindle the expiring war spirit in London, Rome and Paris. The wretched and miserable Masaryk is not the only one of his kind. There are also Masaryks within the borders of the monarchy." This speech as well as the implication in the Clemenceau-Sixtus disclosures caused Czernin's removal and the restoration of Baron Burian as Minister for Foreign Affairs.

In his Mt. Vernon speech of July 4th, President Wilson set forth four ends which amplified his previously stated principles, of which the second was: "The settlement of every question whether of territory, of sovereignty, of economic arrangements, or of political relationship, upon the basis of free acceptance of that

settlement by the people immediately concerned, and not upon the basis of the material interest or advantage of any other nation or people which may desire a different settlement for the sake of its own exterior influence or mastery." This again, points quite directly to the peoples of Austria-Hungary. Baron Burian, on July 16th, declared his approval in main of Wilson's "four ends" and added, as had his predecessor in office, that the monarchy can solve all internal crises without uncalled-for foreign interference. This was plain indication of a growing fear of the subversive effects of separatist propaganda.

DISINTEGRATION OF AUSTRIA-HUNGARY. By the end of the summer of 1918, it had become evident that the last hour of the Central Powers had struck. An urgent appeal on September 15th by Austria-Hungary for a non-binding exchange of views revealed its desperate plight.[10] There was the defection of Bulgaria, the repulse of the German Army at the Marne, the defeat of the Austrians at the Piave, the coming of a million American troops to France. As between Germany and her ally, relations were no longer cordial. With much irresoluteness Austria put forth a plan to in-

[10] This appeal was rather peremptorily answered by the United States that it had repeatedly stated terms upon which it would consider peace, so there was no need for a conference.

corporate a Polish Kingdom as a third component part of the monarchy. That would remove a large and troublesome faction of Slav deputies from the Reichsrat. In answer, Germany argued that her troops had not won victories on the eastern front to be later menaced by a hostile state and a large unredeemed Polish population in East Prussia. The Magyars, under Tisza, insisted, quite naturally, for the maintenance of the dual system. To end these bickerings, the often considered federalization was brought forward. Its effect was to be twofold: the Slavs within the empire would be placated, the Allies, it was hoped, would accept the scheme as a satisfactory answer to national questions. As a matter of fact, popular rebellion had gained too great a momentum to be arrested by promises, and Austria's offer only precipitated the inevitable.[11] The solution as planned, however, was but partial for it did not include Hungary. In the place of imperial Austria, the various national groups, German, Czech, Jugoslav and Ukrainian, were

[11] It was during this crisis that two historic utterances were given by Czech representatives in the Vienna Parliament. On October 2d Deputy Staněk, President of the Czech Parliamentary Union, declared that he recognized only the National Council in Paris as the supreme agency over the rights of his peoples and that any problem of reconstruction (then being discussed) must be solved at a general peace conference. On October 9th, Deputy Zahradník proclaimed in the name of the same Union that their ties with Austria are forever broken. All Czech deputies thereupon left the Reichsrat.

to form separate self-governing assemblies, the federation being held together by a common relation to the emperor. No objection was made, in accordance with Point Thirteen of Wilson's, to the creation of a Polish State.[12]

The Federalization Manifesto was issued October 16th; two days later in answer to a further Austrian offer sent October 7th to conclude an armistice and negotiate peace on the principles enunciated by Wilson in his Fourteen Points, the United States said in adequate commentary and lack of sympathy for the Habsburg dynasty, whom it saw exploiting rather than serving an ideal, that it had recognized the Czechoslovak National Council as a *de facto* belligerent government and bade Austria to deal directly with this body.[13] This sounded the death knell, for the same day the Czechoslovak National Council at Paris, now constituted as a Provisional Government, proclaimed a Declaration of Independence, the formal action of the nation severing its relationship from the monarchy.[14]

On October 29th Austria, in her reply to President Wilson, accepted all views expressed in his last note including a recognition of the rights to independence by the Czechoslovaks,

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[12] Appendix document No. 10.
[13] Appendix document No. 12.
[14] Appendix document No. 11.

and looked toward an immediate armistice,[15] subsequently drawn up by the Allied War Council and accepted by Austria-Hungary on November 3d. After a bloodless coup d'état, the administration of civil and military affairs at Prague passed into new hands and a free and united Czechoslovak Republic was proclaimed. The movement was entirely spontaneous; its leaders had to caution rather than encourage the people. During the next few days of kaleidoscopic changes other national states took form within the defunct empire; the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes tore away in the south, the Poles proclaimed secession in the north as did the Magyars in the east. The German speaking population of Austria adopted a similar course by proclaiming a republic on November 12th. Finally the Emperor Charles abdicated and the rule of the Habsburgs over their cosmopolitan domains, with its official injustices, its imperial broken faith, lapsed into the past, a classical case of historic retribution.

Two delegations of Czechoslovak leaders, one representing the extra-legal administration at Prague, and the other the Provisional Government at Paris, met at Geneva, categorically ratified all the military and diplomatic actions

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[15] Appendix document No. 14.

of the National Council,[16] and then formulated a common program to tide over the initial uncertain period. There was no opportunity for general elections until after the Peace Conference had determined the boundaries of the new state, consequently the first Assembly was formed by each party sending a proportionate number of delegates based upon the representation the party had in the Austrian Parliament. Slovak delegates were coöpted on the advice of the Slovak National Council.[17] On November 14, 1918, this Assembly convened in Prague, deposed the Habsburgs, proclaimed a republic, elected Masaryk as President by acclamation, set up a cabinet with Kramář as Premier, Beneš as Foreign Minister, and Rašín as Finance Minister, and enacted a provisional constitution. After a general election, a National Assembly on February 29, 1920, passed the Constitution and, on May 28th, formally elected Masaryk as President.

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[16] Appendix document No. 16.

[17] On May 1, 1918, the Slovaks for the first time during the war could come out and proclaim their rights against the police government of the Magyars. Dr. V. Šrobár, who presided over this meeting at Liptovský Sv. Mikuláš, was promptly jailed on treasonable charges. Immediately after the October Revolution within the Empire, the Slovaks met again, this time at Turčianský Sv. Martin, and declared their right to settle their own destiny and become a part of the new Czechoslovak Republic. Incidentally, this quite effectively put a stop to "flirting" by Károlyi and his newly organized Hungarian National Council. Appendix document No. 15, for text of resolutions passed by the Slovak National Council.

INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION. The policy of the Allies toward the aspirations of the intransigeant races of Austria-Hungary was opportunist. They sought time and again to break down the morale of the enemy by destroying their unity. Secret *pourparlers* were had with Austrian agents in Switzerland. Allied statesmen blew hot and cold on the flames of nationalism, virtually proclaiming in one breath that the breakup of Austria-Hungary was no part of their war purposes, but autonomy, a word so delightfully vague, must be granted to the oppressed nationalities. After the May, 1918, meeting at Spa, of the two emperors, the Allies perceived that the Habsburgs were no longer masters of their own destiny and became receptive to the idea that the decadent empire must be broken up.

The Czechoslovaks showed the way in Central Europe toward a resurgent nationalism. The story of how this hitherto almost unknown nation gained first the sympathy of the Allied Powers, then international recognition, reads like a romance. Separatist propaganda was carried on with an intensity and efficiency little to be appreciated by the outside world. Press bureaus, publications, patriotic and relief organizations among the nationals in all important centers, particularly in America, all worked toward one end. The Mafia in Prague was the

connecting link with the homeland. The National Council in Paris coördinated all.

The movement had the advantage of possessing at its head men such as Masaryk, Beneš, Kramář and Štefánik. But its real strength lay in the fact that the Czechoslovak nation showed a remarkable and consistent solidarity behind these leaders. To Masaryk, must be given the major share of credit for the work of liberation of his people. To him fell the task by writings, speeches and conferences, to overcome the self-satisfied ignorance on Central European affairs that prevailed among Entente statesmen. It was also Masaryk who realized that by the formation of legions, that on entering the Allied armies under their own flag, that by showing a willingness to shed blood for their country, a most convincing argument would be presented of the sincerity of the Czechoslovak claims. Their meritorious and remarkable service in Siberia finally met with the commendation of the entire world and showed a fitness for free existence. Unlike their less fortunate racial brothers, the Czechoslovaks had no enemy in Allied Councils, but on the contrary, enjoyed the early and continuing support of France. In the Allied note of January 10, 1917, the Czechoslovaks were given specific mention, due, no doubt, to the acquaintance of Štefánik with M. Berthelot of the

French Foreign Office and to the friendly attitude of Premier Briand. On the other hand the Jugoslavs as such, were omitted because of the antagonism of Baron Sonnino, who knew of the secret Treaty of London.[18] As to the Poles, it follows, that any encouragement of their aspirations in the early years of the war would only have offended the old Czarist Government.

On December 16, 1917, the French decreed the formation of Czechoslovak army units, to fight under their own flag, subject, however, to the authority of the French High Command.[19] A further supplementary decree of February 8, 1917, more clearly established the relationship between France and the Czechoslovaks. This, and similar decrees coming from the other Allied nations, gave them a special military status which eventually led to a recognition of belligerency. In Italy the opposition of Foreign Minister Sonnino prevented for some time, any successful coöperation between his Government and the Czechoslovak National Council. The defeat at Caporetto toward the close of 1917 gave Italy good reason to be sponsor of the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities, held at Rome in April, 1918.[20] Following briefly after that, due to the persistent

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[18] Page 43, ante.
[19] Page 35, ante.
[20] Page 41, ante.

diplomacy of Colonel Štefánik, Italy on April 21st, signed a convention with the National Council on the subject of the formation of fighting legions, no longer merely labor battalions, and on May 24th the formal presentation of a war flag took place at Rome. This convention was supplemented by Special Instructions of June 30th. England, on June 3d, made a similar move by recognizing the Czechoslovak Army as an organized unit operating in the Allied cause.[21] In the United States a plan was brought forward by Senator Hitchcock of Nebraska for the creation of a Slavic legion, volunteer troops of Jugoslavs, Czechoslovaks and Poles not subject to army draft, because classified as nominally alien enemies. Such an organization, however, found no immediate favor by the War Department and the armistice closed the venture.

By the late spring of 1918, the vaguely beneficent intentions of the Allies became more apparent. Segmentation of Austria-Hungary gained favor; the national leaders were listened to, if not occasionally consulted. One of the fundamental Wilsonian principles was the right of sufficiently mature people to determine their own government. The Allies accepted the morally binding character of this principle after America's entering into the war. It is

[21] Appendix document No. 4.

obvious that a recognition of independence was impossible; Austria-Hungary, until the October Revolution of 1918, had undisputed *de facto* control over its territory. The Czechoslovaks continuing to show a unity of purpose and responsible power in their National Council, were accorded the intermediate step toward full statehood, recognition of belligerency, and the rights and duties of independent peoples for purposes relating to war. Such recognition necessarily went further than a mere demonstration of moral support; it pledged the Allies to a disruption of the Dual Monarchy.

France again led the way when, on June 30, 1918, President Poincare journeyed to the war zone to make a presentation of colors to Czechoslovak legions. For this occasion Stephen Pichon, Minister of Foreign Affairs, had addressed a note to Beneš, in which he said that "The Government of the Republic, a witness of your efforts and attachment to the cause of the Allies, considers it just and necessary to proclaim the right of your nation to independence, and to recognize publicly and officially the National Council as the supreme organ of the general interests and policy of the future Czechoslovak Government."[22] The dispatch from Balfour, then Secretary for Foreign Affairs, directed to Pichon, said that the

[22] Appendix document No. 5.

British Government associated itself with the sentiments just expressed which represented "a new step in the great strife for liberty and security of small nations especially those which in Austria-Hungary live under the tyranny of a foreign minority." This was followed on August 9th by a *de facto* recognition by Great Britain regarding the Czechoslovaks as an Allied nation, their army as an Allied and belligerent force, and their National Council as the supreme organ of their national interests and present trustee of the future Czechoslovak Government.[23] A further convention on September 3d, extended certain diplomatic privileges to the Czechoslovak National Council. On October 3d Premier Orlando, in a speech before the Italian Parliament, declared that the military convention of April 21st last had had an effect of recognition of the National Council as a *de facto* government.

These successive recognitions of belligerency by the major Allied countries gave the National Council a quasi-political status. Its flag and commissions were acknowledged, it could look for loans and military equipment. Austria-Hungary, on the other hand, was not compelled to grant similar recognition, and still could, from a narrow viewpoint of municipal law, if we consider her void of moral obligation,

[23] Appendix document No. 6.

hold such members of the Czechoslovak legions as had formerly served in her armies, as deserters. Fear of reprisal, however, by this time had induced Austria-Hungary to adopt humane methods in the treatment of recaptured soldiers.

The sudden recall of Ambassador Dumba to Vienna in 1915, requested by Secretary of State Lansing, brought the status and question of Austria-Hungary for the first time before the American people. The State Department came into possession of certain dispatches which conclusively proved, and this was never denied, that Ambassador Dumba was planning to instigate strikes in American munition plants. Secretary Lansing transmitted a note, dated September 8, 1915, to Ambassador Penfield, instructing him to inform Vienna that the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Washington was no longer acceptable.

Masaryk more than any other man was instrumental in securing a recognition of co-belligerency from the United States. An exile from his own country, he had come from Russia in the spring of 1918, where he had been reorganizing and consolidating the position of his legions. With Masaryk's advent, the precarious situation in Russia was placed clearly before government officials. Military intervention could only be successful if done on a large

scale, which then was more or less impossible. Better would be a *de facto* recognition of the Soviet; the Allies then could throw their influence upon the Bolsheviks and particularly because the Bolsheviks had not yet forgotten the bitter medicine taken at the signing of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty. From Washington, Masaryk established similar sympathetic contacts as he had in London. Meanwhile, local Czechoslovak organizations constantly agitated for a liberation of their motherland. Congress was reticent in expressing any definite sympathy before its declaration of war against the Dual Monarchy, not alone in conformance with neutrality but because of numerous Magyar and Austrian-German settlers in America. After the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities held at Rome, American opinion, guided carefully by President Wilson, began to express itself against the Dual Empire. Senator Kenyon of Iowa, in addressing the Senate on June 19, 1918, showed that he had grasped the situation when he said that there was another route to Berlin, by way of Vienna, and some message of encouragement should be sent to the peoples under Austrian domination. Speaking in a similar vein, also before the Senate, Senator Lodge from Massachusetts, asked, on August 22d, that the Slav populations, under the government of the Habsburgs, be established as

independent states. Two congressional resolutions for Czech independence had been put forward: the first by Congressman Sabath (Ill.) on May 5, 1917, 1st Session, 65th Congress; the second by Senator King (Utah) on May 31, 1918, 2d Session, 65th Congress.

The National Council was recognized on September 2, 1918, as a *de facto* and belligerent government, clothed with proper authority to direct the military and political affairs of the Czechoslovaks. The general proposition that such recognition cannot be granted a people in rebellion unless they have a *de facto* political organization over some definite portion of territory, applies only to the conduct of neutrals. As a natural and necessary war measure, there was nothing to restrain the Allies from recognizing belligerency of any peoples of Austria-Hungary even though they did not have the ordinary attributes of a belligerent, a fixed territory, providing the rules of civilized warfare were observed.

Following its success in gaining belligerent and *de facto* recognition from the principal Allied Powers, the National Council at Paris constituted itself as a Provisional Government and on October 14th sent official communications abroad to that effect. A reply was had from Pichon on October 15th and from Sonnino, October 24th, officially recognizing the

latest act of the embryonic government.[24] And when, a few days later, to maintain the continuity of legal authority, the administration in Prague was taken over by Kramář and his co-nationals, the long and bitter struggle for independence came to an end, opening a new chapter in the history of the Czechoslovak nation.

TREATIES OF ST. GERMAIN-EN-LAYE AND TRIANON. Secret engagements and territorial bargains made under traditional policies of imperialism and stern necessities of conflict marked, before the end of the first year of the war, the departure from idealism which had infused the people of the Allied countries to oppose the military autocrats of the Central Powers. This was restored in part by Wilson, in vision and purpose far ahead of his generation, who sought to create in Europe an enlightened era of international justice. The sum total was that when the combatants met in Paris to discuss peace, the atmosphere was impregnated with fear and distrust rather than calm reason and concert of action.

When it came to settling the problems of the lands of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which had ceased to exist as such, statesmen assembled at Paris were confronted with untold difficulties because of the array of conflicting

[24] Appendix documents 9, 13.

racial interests. The October Revolution had created a certain *status quo,* based on the principle of nationality which, however, satisfied nobody. The war had administered a severe shock to many of complacent mind, who, not fully comprehending the spontaneity of the national movements, raised the cry of "balkanization," and looked for a change back to the old condition of affairs.

Well realizing that their preconceived plans and harmony of action might be disturbed if general discussion were allowed, the Great Powers, France, Great Britain, Italy and the United States, closeted themselves to the exclusion of advice on Central European problems. The Small Powers, most directly interested in the breakup of Austria-Hungary, were not asked to participate except on such matters as offered purely questions of national policy. The French, perhaps more than any other power, did what they could to support their claims, but with the obvious purpose of creating the small states into a ring around Germany.[25]

On January 18, 1919, plenipotentiaries Beneš, Kramář, and the representatives from

[25] On September 28, 1918, France had made a special agreement with the National Council, whereby she promised to support Czechoslovak claims for historic boundaries in exchange for the privilege of making certain dispositions of the Czechoslovak legions.

Poland, were admitted to the opening session of the Conference. This was an act of commanding importance. By so entering into relations as are held to exist between independent states alone, Czechoslovakia and Poland were formally recognized as members of the family of nations having acquired all the necessary attributes of complete statehood. The Peace Conference cannot be said to have created the succession states. They were *fait accompli* before the Conference, which only confirmed this fact.[26]

By making vigorous protest, at the second plenary session of January 25th, the small states, now lined up for mutual protection, finally gained some degree of participation in the framing of the Treaties. At a later stage, again during the discussion of limitation of armaments and protection of minorities, sharp protest was made against the seemingly high-hand attitude of the Great Powers. The Czechoslovaks were afraid to reduce armaments because of the hostile intentions of the Magyars; the Poles and Rumanians because of the Bolsheviks. Arguments which the Great Powers put forward and common sense dictated, lost weight by reason of the fact that

[26] The independence of Czechoslovakia was recognized by Article 81 of the German Treaty, Article 53 of the Austrian Treaty and Article 48 of the Hungarian Treaty.

they could set no such example of general disarmament themselves. As to the protection of minorities, this was settled by treaty provisions, also after heated debate.

On March 25th, the "Four," Wilson, Clemenceau, Lloyd George and Orlando, formally superseded the "Ten" as the supreme organ of the Conference. On the first of June, a draft treaty in its nature primarily political, was presented to the Austrian Peace Delegates. On June 28th, after the departure of Wilson and Lloyd George, a council consisting of Lansing, Balfour, Pichon, Tittoni, and Clemenceau was entrusted with revising the Treaty of St. Germain, signed on September 10th and ratified August 18, 1919.

Internal political difficulties, where the government swung from extreme left to extreme right, delayed settlement with Hungary. The Supreme Council at Paris aggravated the condition by its vacillating policy and obvious fear that the Magyars would coalesce with Bolshevik Russia and bring chaos to Central Europe. It was not until June 4, 1920, that the Treaty of Trianon, modeled in text after the Austrian Treaty, with only such changes as circumstances necessitated, was signed, Beneš and Osuský representing Czechoslovak interests. In sitting judgment over the claims put forth by the succession states, the broad principle of

nationality was recognized without, however, extending the formula of self-determination, *ad absurdum.*

The aim of the Czechoslovak revolutionary action was the breakup of Austria-Hungary, and the creation of an independent state. This having been accomplished, the chief task now of the two delegates, Beneš and Kramář, was to preserve the situation which had taken such a tremendous effort to create.

In an ethnological sense, Austria-Hungary never had been a nation. It lacked the attribute of an organic state, homogeneity of race, hence common language, religion and institutions. The mixture of the racial groups within the boundaries of the old empire made it impossible to agree upon the frontiers of the new states on any one settled basis, historical, linguistic or otherwise.

Beneš and Kramář pleaded for a retention of the boundaries of the lands of the Bohemian Crown (Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia) by virtue of historic "state rights." This included a large German minority, in main descended from settlers who had been invited in for economic and political reasons by the Přemyslide dynasty of the 13th century, who now occupy the districts around the industrial towns of Cheb (Eger), Liberec (Reichenberg), Trutnov (Trautenau),

Opava (Troppau), Olomouc (Olmütz).[27] It is more than probable that the present disposition of this problem is for the best interests of both Czechs and Germans who are, along the border towns, inextricably mixed. Any other solution would have worked against the inhabitants themselves by separating industrial districts from their complementary agricultural districts and market in the Bohemian plateau and would have exposed these industrial districts to the formidable competition of the combines in Germany. The Czechoslovaks put forth a further argument: that their territory was so configured by mountain chains and river systems, the Krušné Hory (Erzgebirge), and Krkonoše (Riesengebirge) on the Saxony frontier, the Šumava (Böhmerwald) on the Bavarian, and the Sudety (Sudeten) on the Polish frontier, all following the historical boundaries as to form a natural, geographic and defensible barrier.

When it came to the delimitation of the southern boundary of the Czechoslovak Republic, a still harder problem presented itself. There was no historic boundary to serve as a guide, no continuous natural frontier, and the races, Magyar and Slovak, were as intermixed as the Germans and the Czechs in the north. Furthermore, the situation was aggravated by

[27] Page 12, ante.

the unsettled conditions within Hungary. With the fall of Károlyi's Republic, Hungary became Bolshevik under Bela Kuhn, who sought to enthuse Magyar nationalism to his support by marching his Red Army across the Slovak frontier in June, 1919, but soon withdrawing under pressure of the Allies. The Conference compromised between linguistic and geographical boundaries. The Danube was accepted as part of the southern frontier, and also the mountain range in the northeast that had separated Galicia from Hungary. The Danube River town of Bratislava (Pressburg) was given to Czechoslovakia. Although its population is about equally divided between Germans, Magyars and Slovaks, still the hinterland is wholly Slovak.

The Council undoubtedly had in mind the principle that every state has the right to conditions and communications that will assure its economic existence, when Czechoslovakia was given access to the sea under Articles 331 and 363 of the German Treaty by the internationalization of the Danube and also of the Labe (Elbe) and the Odra (Oder), together with certain harbor rights under ninety-nine year leases in Hamburg and Stettin. Under Article 322 of the Austrian Treaty, Czechoslovakia was granted communication with the Adriatic by train connections toward Fiume and Trieste.

The Carpatho-Russians are an isolated race related to the Little Russians, living south of the Carpathian Mountains. They were given political autonomy by the Conference, with a local diet and executive council, and special participation in the Prague Government.[28] The Carpatho-Russians represent the most backward of the races under former Magyar rule which apparently could not be interested to penetrate their territory with schools or even exploit the natural resources. As the matter stood at the close of the war, these people in the wake of the other oppressed peoples of the Dual Empire, offered expressions of self-determination but in fact were unequal to the task of free existence. During President Masaryk's visit to America in 1918, he was approached by delegates of Carpatho-Russian organizations with a request for a voluntary union of their motherland with Czechoslovakia. In December, 1918, a deputation from the Carpatho-Russian National Council, went to Prague with the same mission. That action was approved at a representative meeting held May 8, 1919, at Užhorod, their principal town, and Dr. Anton Beskid was sent to the Peace Conference to demand officially

[28] German Treaty, Article 81; Austrian Treaty, Article 53; Hungarian Treaty, Article 48; treaty between Principal Allied and Associated Powers and Czechoslovakia, Chapter II, Articles 10-14.

an autonomous union with the Czechoslovak State. From a strategic viewpoint, the addition of Carpatho-Russia gives the Czechoslovaks a certain domination over Hungary from the Carpathians, but more important still, is the economic advantage of direct access to Rumania and Russia.

The affair between the Czechoslovaks and Poles in Silesia represented the advanced stage of post-war hysteria. The center of the controversy was Těšín (Teschen), a town of considerable size and importance, having a mixed population of Germans, Czechoslovaks and Poles, the latter claiming the town by reason of ethnographic considerations. The Czechoslovaks maintained their argument of historic frontiers on the north, Těšín from the 14th century having belonged to the Bohemian Crown. The underlying cause for the dispute was the fact that this town occupied a strategic railroad position in rich coal fields, which supplied highly industrialized Bohemia. As the controversy reached a danger point, it was put before the Supreme Council which, under the Treaties of 1918, was entrusted with the work of delimiting the frontiers of these new states.[29] First came the idea of a plebiscite, but this was mutually abandoned for fear of race vio-

[29] German Treaty, Art. 81, 87; Austrian Treaty, Art. 91; Hungarian Treaty, Art. 75.

lence that might accompany the elections. On January 31, 1919, an Inter-Allied Mission was authorized to investigate the situation and render a binding decision. In an award given July 28, 1920, a line of division was demarcated, the greater portion of the coal mines and railways going to Czechoslovakia, while Poland received other rich but unexploited coal fields, the right to certain periodical shipments from the Czechoslovak mines and most of the town of Těšín. Question also arose over the disposition of the Orava and Spiš territory in the Tatra Mountains, in the northeast, considered of strategic military importance. This territory, as in the case of Těšín, was delimited in such a way as to endeavor to reconcile both Poles and Czechoslovaks.

One of the greatest causes of political instability in Central Europe was the constant agitation of racial minorities. We had example of this in Austria-Hungary. When the treaties recognized the boundaries of the new states, new non-national enclaves were included, new minorities were formed, ethnic considerations frequently giving way to geographical divisions. The Great Powers felt it essential to protect these minorities from becoming the object of race hatreds. Toward that end special treaties were imposed upon those states having minority populations whereby the protection

of life and liberty was assured to all without distinction of birth, language, race or religion. These treaties are alike in essentials and constitute obligations of international concern under the observance of the League of Nations. As with some of the other issues presented by the Great Powers, this was considered an infringement of sovereignty. A Minorities Treaty was signed by and between Czechoslovakia and the Allied and Associated Powers September 10, 1919, on the occasion of the signature of the Treaty of St. Germain. Further provision for the protection of minorities was incorporated into the Czechoslovak Constitution.[30]

The ratifying and treaty making power are in different hands in the United States. After the elections of November, 1919, Congress felt no obligation to accept the treaties which had been negotiated at the Paris Peace Conference, and signed by American representatives. By proclamation of President Harding of November 17, 1921, the state of war between the United States and the Austrian Empire, as formerly constituted, was declared to have terminated as of the preceding July 2d, the date when the executive signature was affixed in approval to a Joint Congressional Peace Resolu-

[30] Czechoslovak Constitution, Art. 106 and Art. 128-134; see also Austrian Treaty, Art. 62-69, and Hungarian Treaty, Art. 54-60.

tion. This proclamation included the text of a separate treaty with Austria, negotiated and signed at Vienna on August 24th. A similar proclamation of December 20, 1921, following a separate treaty signed at Budapest, August 29th, and under like terms with the Austrian Treaty, established friendly relations with Hungary.

APPENDIX DOCUMENTS

No. 1

Deputy Staněk in the Austrian Parliament on May 30, 1917.

The representatives of the Czech people from all three provinces of the Crown of St. Václav, on entering the Reichsrat at this historic moment of the World War, henceforth bearing in consideration the generally accepted movement which aims at removing the domination of one people over another, make the following declaration: The delegation of the Czech people is profoundly convinced that the present dualistic form of government has, to the obvious injury of the general interest, created ruling and oppressed peoples. Therefore, it has become necessary that the Habsburg-Lorraine Monarchy be transformed into a federal state composed of free and equal national states, with the view of removing every national privilege and assuring unhampered development of every people to the interest of the whole monarchy and dynasty. While taking our stand at this historic moment on the natural right of peoples to self-determination and free development, a claim which, in our case is further strengthened by inalienable historic rights, formally recognized by the State, we shall, in the name of our people, work for the union of all branches of the Czechoslovak people, in a single democratic state, including also the Slovak

branch of the race whose territory adjoins our historic Czech fatherland.

No. 2

France decrees formation of Czechoslovak Legion.

The President of the French Republic, upon the recommendation of the Premier, the Minister of War, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, decrees:

Article I. The Czechoslovaks organized in an autonomous army and recognizing from the military standpoint the supreme authority of the French High Command, will fight under their own flag against the Central Powers.

Article II. This national army is placed from the political standpoint under the direction of the Czechoslovak National Council with headquarters at Paris.

Article III. The equipment of the Czechoslovak Army as well as its further maintenance is assured by the French Government.

Article IV. Provisions governing the French Army as regards organization, military ranks, administration and discipline, are applicable to the Czechoslovak Army.

Article V. The Czechoslovak Army will be recruited from among:

1. Czechoslovaks at present serving with the French Army.

2. Czechoslovaks from other countries permitted to be transferred into the Czechoslovak Army or to volunteer for service in this Army for the duration of the war.

Article VI. Further ministerial instructions will govern application of this decree.

Article VII. The Premier, Minister of War, and Minister of Foreign Affairs are charged, each in his own department, with the execution of this decree, which shall be published in the Journal Officiel of the French Republic and inserted in the Bulletin des Lois.

Done at Paris, this 16th day of December, 1917.

POINCARÉ,
President of the Republic;

PICHON,
Minister of Foreign Affairs;

CLEMENCEAU,
Premier and Minister of War.

No. 3

Resolutions adopted by the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities of Austria-Hungary held at Rome April 8, 1918.

Representatives of nationalities subject completely or partly to the domination of Austria-Hungary, the Italians, Poles, Rumanians, Czechoslovaks and Jugoslavs have united in affirming as follows the principles by which their common action shall be guided:

1. Each of these peoples proclaims its right to constitute its own nationality and state unity or to complete this unity and to attain full political and economic independence.

2. Each of these peoples recognizes in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy the instrument of German domination and the fundamental obstacle to the realization of its aspirations and rights.

3. The Congress recognizes the necessity of a common struggle against common oppressors in order that each of these peoples may attain its complete liberation and complete national unity as a single free state.

No. 4

British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Arthur J. Balfour, addresses letter to Edward Beneš, then General Secretary of the Czechoslovak National Council at Paris.

MONSIEUR:

In reply to the memoranda which you were good enough to furnish me this 10th and 11th inst., I have the honor to assure you that His Majesty's Government, which has every possible sympathy with the Czechoslovak movement, will be glad to give the same recognition to this movement as has been granted by the Governments of France and Italy.

His Majesty's Government is therefore prepared to recognize the Czechoslovak National Council as the supreme organ of the Czechoslovaks in the Allied countries, and to recognize the Czechoslovak Army as an organized unit operating in the Allied cause, and to attach thereto a British liaison officer as soon as the need for this may arise.

His Majesty's Government will at the same time be prepared to accord to the National Council polit-

ical rights concerning the civil affairs of the Czechoslovaks similar to those already accorded to the Polish National Committee.

I may add that the decisions stated above have been communicated to the Governments of the interested Allies.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR.

Dated, June 3, 1918.

No. 5

France recognizes Czechoslovak National Council at Paris as the supreme organ of a future independent state. Pichon's letter to Beneš.

M. SECRETARY GENERAL:

At this moment when the 21st Infantry Regiment, the first unit of the autonomous Czechoslovak Army of France, is preparing to leave its quarters, after having received its flag, and to advance to a sector amidst its French brothers in arms, the Government of the Republic, a witness to your efforts and attachment to the cause of the Allies, considers it just and necessary to proclaim the rights of your nation to independence, and to recognize publicly and officially the National Council as the supreme organ of the general interests and policy of the future Czechoslovak Government.

For long centuries the Czechoslovak nation had possessed the incomparable blessing of independence; it was deprived of it by the violence of the Habsburgs

allied with German princes. Historic rights are imprescriptible. It is in defense of these rights that France, attacked, is fighting today with her Allies. The cause of the Czechoslovaks is especially dear to it.

France cannot forget the manifestation in Prague on the 8th of December, 1870; she cannot forget the resistance of the population and the refusal of the soldiers to fight for Austria-Hungary, heroism bathed by the blood of thousands of patriots.

She heard the appeal of the Czech deputies on the 6th of January, the 13th of April and the 16th of May, last.

Faithful to the principle of nationality and liberation of oppressed peoples, the Government of the Republic considers the claims of the Czechoslovak nation as just and well founded, and will apply all her goodwill, the moment having come, to make known your aspirations for independence within the historic boundaries of your provinces, finally escaping the oppressive yoke of Austria and Hungary.

I am most happy, M. Secretary General, to put these declarations before you. Your sentiments reflect those of your compatriots; they are a pledge of a happy future for your country.

In the name of the Government of the Republic, I express the sincerest and warmest wishes that the Czechoslovak State may soon become by the common efforts of all the Allies, in close union with Poland and the Jugoslav State, an impassable barrier to Germanic aggression and a factor of peace in a Europe reconstructed according to the principles of justice and right of nationalities.

Please accept, M. Secretary General, the assurance of my highest esteem.

S. Pichon.

Dated, Paris, June 29, 1918.

No. 6

Great Britain recognizes Czechoslovak National Council, August 9, 1918.

Since the beginning of the war the Czechoslovak nation has resisted the common enemy by every means in its power. The Czechoslovaks have constituted a considerable army, fighting on three different battlefields and attempting in Russia and Siberia to arrest the Germanic invasion.

In consideration of its efforts to achieve independence, Great Britain regards the Czechoslovaks as an allied nation, and recognizes the unity of the three Czechoslovak armies, as an allied and belligerent army waging regular warfare against Austria-Hungary and Germany.

Great Britain also recognizes the right of the Czechoslovak National Council as the supreme organ of the Czechoslovak national interests and as the present trustee of the future Czechoslovak Government, to exercise supreme authority over this allied and belligerent army.

J. A. Balfour.

No. 7

United States recognizes Czechoslovak National Council, September 2, 1918, published the following day.

The Czechoslovak peoples having taken up arms against the German and Austro-Hungarian Empires, and having placed organized armies in the field, which are waging war against those empires under officers of their own nationality and in accordance with the rules and practices of civilized nations.

The Czechoslovaks having, in prosecution of their independent purposes in the present war, confided supreme political authority to the Czechoslovak National Council.

The Government of the United States recognizes that a state of belligerency exists between the Czechoslovaks thus organized and the German and Austro-Hungarian Empires.

It also recognizes the Czechoslovak National Council as a *de facto* belligerent Government, clothed with proper authority to direct the military and political affairs of the Czechoslovaks.

The Government of the United States further declares that it is prepared to enter formally into relations with the *de facto* Government thus recognized for the purpose of prosecuting the war against the common enemy, the Empires of Germany and Austria-Hungary.

ROBERT LANSING.

No. 8

Beneš' communication to principal Allied Governments informing them of establishment of a Provisional Government, October 14, 1918.

By the declaration of the United States Government, September 3, 1918, the Czechoslovak National

Council with its headquarters at Paris was recognized as a *de facto* Czechoslovak government.

That recognition was confirmed by the Allied Governments: by England in her convention with the National Council on September 3, 1918; by France in a convention September 28, 1918; and by Italy in a declaration by the Prime Minister on October 3, 1918.

I have the honor to advise you that, in view of these successive recognitions, the Czechoslovak Provisional Government by a decision of September 26, 1918, is constituted as follows, having established for the time being its headquarters at Paris:

T. G. Masaryk, President of the Provisional Government and Prime Minister, Minister of Finances.

Edward Beneš, Minister of Foreign Affairs and of the Interior.

Milan Štefánik, Minister of War.

The Ministry will soon appoint the following representatives to the principal Allied Governments:

Stephen Osuský, chargé d'affaires of the Czechoslovak Legation in London, to the Government of Great Britain.

Leon Sychrava, chargé d'affaires of the Czechoslovak Legation in Paris, to the Government of France.

Leon Borský, chargé d'affaires of the Czechoslovak Legation in Rome, to the Royal Government of Italy.

Charles Pergler, chargé d'affaires of the Czechoslovak Legation at Washington, to the Government of the United States.

Bohdan Pavlů, now in Omsk, representing our

Government in Russia. The representatives to Japan and Serbia will be named later.

We have the honor to inform you, M. Minister, that we have made our decisions in agreement with the political leaders of our country. During the last three years, our entire political and military action was done in complete accord with them. Finally, on October 2, 1918, Czechoslovak deputy, Staněk, President of the Czech Union at the Vienna Parliament, solemnly pronounced that the Czechoslovak National Council at Paris was named as the supreme organ of the Czechoslovak Army to represent the Czechoslovak nation before the Allies at the peace conference. On the 9th of October, his colleague, Deputy Zahradník, speaking in the name of the same Union, declared that the Czechoslovaks were definitely leaving the Vienna Parliament to break forever the ties with Austria-Hungary.

Trusting to the decision of our nation and our army, we assume from now on as a national provisional government, the political leadership of the Czech and Slovak lands, and as such enter officially into communication with the Allied Governments, replying either upon our bilateral agreements with them, or upon their solemn declarations.

We affirm the above, in a manner particularly solemn, and at a time when great political problems call all the nations to take part in decisions which perhaps will give to Europe for many centuries a new political order.

No. 9

France recognizes Provisional Government.

M. MINISTER:

By a dispatch dated the 14th inst., you have been good enough to inform me that, by a decision made the 26th of September past, the National Council, acting by reason of conventions signed with the Allied Governments and in complete agreement with the political leaders remaining in Czechoslovakia, has established itself as a Provisional Government and made its headquarters in Paris.

You add that on October 2, 1918, Deputy Staněk, President of the Czech Parliamentary Union at Vienna, solemnly pronounced that the Czechoslovak National Council in Paris was named as the supreme organ of the Czechoslovak Army to represent the Czechoslovak nation before the Allies at the peace conference; that on October 9th of the same month, Deputy Zahradník, speaking in the name of the same union, declared that the Czechoslovaks were definitely leaving the Vienna Parliament to break forever the ties with Austria-Hungary.

Relying on the decision of the nation and the army, the National Provisional Government henceforth assumes leadership of the political future of the Czechoslovaks and as such enters officially into communication with the Allies.

M. T. G. Masaryk will exercise the functions of President of the Government and at the same time that of Prime Minister and Minister of Finance; you take the portfolio of Foreign Affairs and that of

the Interior; M. Milan Štefánik, that of War. The chargés d'affaires will soon be appointed to the Allied Governments.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of that communication.

The sympathy of France for the Czechoslovaks does not date from today, and need not be reaffirmed. All free people and foremost France has rightly admired the patriotism, courage, spirit of sacrifice of the Czechoslovak nation and army.

The Government of the Republic was happy to acknowledge by its agreement of the 28th of June preceding, the right to independence of the Czechoslovak nation, and to recognize the National Council as a *de facto* government, thereby giving evidence of the admiration and sympathy which is due an illustrious nation, reborn after having undergone, without giving up, centuries of oppression.

It is with a feeling of profound satisfaction that, in the name of the Republic, I recognize officially the National Provisional Government of the Czechoslovaks. The country which you represent will see in that act a glorious manifestation of the victory that the French soldiers, fighting alongside of their comrades the Czechoslovaks and the Allies, decisively won over the armies of the Germanic Empires.

Please accept, M. Minister, the assurance of my high esteem.

S. Pichon.

Paris, October 15, 1918.

No. 10

Federalization Manifesto issued October 16, 1918.

To My Loyal Austrian Peoples!

Since I ascended the throne it has been my constant endeavor to secure for all my peoples the peace that is so much desired, and also to point out to the peoples of Austria the ways in which they may freely develop their national energies and realize intellectual and economic welfare, unhindered by checks and frictions.

The dreadful struggle of the World War has so far hindered the work of peace. Heroism and loyalty, self-sacrificing endurance of distress and privations have protected the Fatherland in these grave times. The severe sacrifices of the war must ensure for us an honorable peace, on whose threshold we stand today, with God's help.

Now the reconstruction of the Fatherland on its natural, and therefore, most reliable foundations, must be undertaken without delay. The wishes of the Austrian people are to be scrupulously observed and complied with. I have resolved to accomplish this work with the free coöperation of my peoples in the spirit of that principle which the Allied Monarchies have acknowledged in their peace proposals. In conformity with the will of its people, Austria is to become a Federal State in which every nationality will create its own commonwealth in the territory in which it dwells. The union of the Polish territory of Austria with the independent Polish State is not

in any way prejudiced. The city and district of Trieste receives a special position in accordance with the wishes of the inhabitants.

The new arrangement by which the integrity of the lands of the Hungarian Crown is in no way affected, is to secure independence to each national state-unit; it will, however, also effectively protect common interests and above all be applicable where the connection between the states is a vital necessity to the existence of the individual states. Especially is the union of all forces desirable in order successfully to solve the big problems, arising as a consequence of the war, according to justice and reason.

Until this transformation is accomplished by means of legislation, the existing arrangements for the safeguarding of the general interests remain unaltered. My government is empowered to make all arrangements for the reconstruction of Austria without delay. I call upon the peoples of whose self-determination the new empire will be established, to coöperate in the great task through National Councils, which formed from the Reichsrat deputies of each nation, are to comply with the interests of the peoples among themselves as well as in coöperation with my Government.

Thus may our Fatherland, strengthened by harmony with the nations which surround it, arise from the storms of war as a league of free peoples. The blessing of the Almighty be on our labor so that the great work of peace which we are beginning may bring happiness to all my peoples.

(Signed) KARL.

(Countersigned) HUSSAREK.

No. 11

Declaration of Independence.

At this grave moment, when the Hohenzollerns are offering peace in order to stop the victorious advance of the Allied armies and to prevent the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary and Turkey, and when the Habsburgs are promising the federalization of the empire and autonomy to the dissatisfied nationalities committed to their rule, we, the Czechoslovak National Council, recognized by the Allied and American governments as the Provisional Government of the Czechoslovak State and nation, in complete accord with the Declaration of the Czech Deputies made in Prague on January 6, 1918, and realizing that federalization, and, still more, autonomy, mean nothing under a Habsburg dynasty, do hereby make and declare this our Declaration of Independence.

We do this because of our belief that no people should be forced to live under a sovereignty they do not recognize, and because of our knowledge and firm conviction that our nation cannot freely develop in a Habsburg mock-federation, which is only a new form of the denationalizing oppression under which we have suffered for the past three hundred years. We consider freedom to be the first prerequisite for federalization, and believe that the free nations of Central and Eastern Europe may easily federate should they find it necessary.

We make this declaration on the basis of our historic and natural right. We have been an independent state since the seventh century; and, in 1526, as an independent state, consisting of Bohemia,

Moravia, and Silesia, we joined with Austria and Hungary in a defensive union against the Turkish danger. We have never voluntarily surrendered our rights as an independent state in this confederation. The Habsburgs broke their compact with our nation by illegally transgressing our rights and violating the Constitution of our state which they had pledged themselves to uphold, and we therefore refuse longer to remain a part of Austria-Hungary in any form.

We claim the right of Bohemia to be reunited with her Slovak brethren of Slovakia, once part of our national state, later torn from our national body, and fifty years ago incorporated in the Hungarian State of the Magyars, who, by their unspeakable violence and ruthless oppression of their subject races have lost all moral and human right to rule anybody but themselves.

The world knows the history of our struggle against the Habsburg oppression, intensified and systematized by the Austro-Hungarian Dualistic Compromise of 1867. This dualism is only a shameless organization of brute force and exploitation of the majority by the minority; it is a political conspiracy of the Germans and Magyars against our own as well as the other Slav and the Latin nations of the monarchy. The world knows the justice of our claims, which the Habsburgs themselves dared not deny. Francis Joseph, in the most solemn manner repeatedly recognized the sovereign rights of our nation. The Germans and Magyars opposed this recognition, and Austria-Hungary, bowing before the Pan-Germans, became a colony of Germany, and, as her vanguard to the East, provoked the last Balkan

conflict, as well as the present world war, which was begun by the Habsburgs alone without the consent of the representatives of the people.

We cannot and will not continue to live under the direct or indirect rule of the violators of Belgium, France and Serbia, the would-be murderers of Russia and Rumania, the murderers of tens of thousands of civilians and soldiers of our blood, and the accomplices in numberless unspeakable crimes committed in this war against humanity by the two degenerate and irresponsible dynasties. We will not remain a part of a state which has no justification for existence, and which, refusing to accept the fundamental principles of modern world organization, remains only an artificial and immoral political structure, hindering every movement toward democratic and social progress. The Habsburg dynasty, weighed down by a huge inheritance of error and crime, is a perpetual menace to the peace of the world, and we deem it our duty toward humanity and civilization to aid in bringing about its downfall and destruction.

We reject the sacreligious assertion that the power of the Habsburg and Hohenzollern dynasties is of divine origin; we refuse to recognize the divine rights of kings. Our nation elected the Habsburgs to the throne of Bohemia of its own free will and by the same right deposes them. We hereby declare the Habsburg dynasty unworthy of leading our nation, and deny all of their claims to rule in the Czechoslovak Land, which we here and now declare shall henceforth be a free and independent people and nation.

We accept and shall adhere to the ideals of modern democracy, as they have been the ideals of our nation for centuries. We accept the American principles as laid down by President Wilson; the principles of liberated mankind, of the actual equality of nations, and of governments deriving all their just power from the consent of the governed. We, the nation of Comenius, cannot but accept these principles expressed in the American Declaration of Independence, the principles of Lincoln, and of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. For these principles our nation shed its blood in the memorable Hussite Wars five hundred years ago, for these same principles, beside her Allies, our nation is shedding its blood today in Russia, Italy and France.

We shall outline only the main principles of the Constitution of the Czechoslovak Nation; the final decision as to the Constitution itself falls to the legally chosen representatives of the liberated and united people.

The Czechoslovak State shall be a republic. In constant endeavor for progress it will guarantee complete freedom of conscience, religion and science, literature and art, speech, the press and the right of assembly and petition. The church shall be separated from the state. Our democracy shall rest on universal suffrage; women shall be placed on an equal footing with men, politically, socially, and culturally. The rights of the minority shall be safeguarded by proportional representation; national minorities shall enjoy equal rights. The government shall be parliamentary in form and shall recognize the principles of initiative and referendum. The standing army will be replaced by militia.

The Czechoslovak nation will carry out far-reaching social and economic reforms; the large estates will be redeemed for home colonization, patents of nobility will be abolished. Our nation will assume its part of the Austro-Hungarian pre-war public debt; the debts for this war we leave to those who incurred them.

In its foreign policy the Czechoslovak nation will accept its full share of responsibility in the reorganization of Eastern Europe. It accepts fully the democratic and social principle of nationality, and subscribes to the doctrine that all covenants and treaties shall be entered into openly and frankly without secret diplomacy.

Our constitution shall provide an efficient, rational, and just government, which will exclude all special privileges and prohibit class legislation.

Democracy has defeated theocratic autocracy. Militarism is overcome, democracy is victorious; on the basis of democracy mankind will be reorganized. The forces of darkness have served the victory, the longed-for age of humanity is dawning.

We believe in democracy; we believe in liberty, and liberty evermore.

Given in Paris, on the eighteenth of October, 1918.

PROFESSOR THOMAS G. MASARYK,
Prime Minister and Minister of Finance;
GENERAL DR. MILAN R. ŠTEFÁNIK,
Minister of National Defence;
DR. EDWARD BENEŠ,
Minister of Foreign Affairs and of Interior.

No. 12

United States to Austria-Hungary.

SIR:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your note of the 7th instant in which you transmit a communication of the Imperial and Royal Government of Austria-Hungary to the President. I am now instructed by the President to request you to be good enough, through your Government, to convey to the Imperial and Royal Government the following reply:

The President deems it his duty to say to the Austro-Hungarian Government that he cannot entertain the present suggestion of that Government because of certain events of utmost importance which, occurring since the delivery of his address of the 8th of January last, have necessarily altered the attitude and responsibility of the Government of the United States. Among the fourteen terms of peace which the President formulated at that time occurred the following:

"X. The peoples of Austria-Hungary whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity of autonomous development."

Since that sentence was written and uttered to the Congress of the United States the Government of the United States has recognized that a state of belligerency exists between the Czechoslovaks and the German and Austro-Hungarian Empires and that the Czechoslovak National Council is a *de facto* belligerent government clothed with proper authority

to direct the military and political affairs of the Czechoslovaks. It has also recognized in the fullest manner the justice of the nationalistic aspirations of the Jugoslavs for freedom.

The President is, therefore, no longer at liberty to accept the mere "autonomy" of these peoples as a basis of peace, but is obliged to insist that they, and not he, shall be the judges of what action on the part of the Austro-Hungarian Government will satisfy their aspirations and their conception of their rights and destiny as members of the family of nations.

Accept, Sir, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

ROBERT LANSING.

Dated, October 18, 1918.

No. 13

Italy recognizes Provisional Government.

M. MINISTER:

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of a note dated the 14th inst., in which you inform me of the Constitution of the Czechoslovak Provisional Government. In your note of the 15th inst., you have been good enough to inform me of the decision to name a diplomatic representative for Rome. I thank you for these communications and have the honor to inform you that the Royal Government recognizes the Czechoslovak National Provisional Government.

On this happy event, I repeat to you the expressions of warm sympathy and admiration with which the Royal Government and Italian nation has followed the efforts and sacrifices of the Czechoslovaks

to attain their supreme aim: freedom from foreign oppression and independence.

Italy, whose national independence was not gained except at the expense of great sacrifices, is well able to appreciate the sufferings and noble aspirations of the Czechoslovak people. The historic events which have unfolded, have brought our two nations together in a struggle against the same enemy, Italy in order to accomplish her national unity, the Czechoslovaks to fight for their existence as an independent state. The destiny of our two peoples is dedicated by the fraternity of the armies, the ties of an everlasting friendship based on a common ideal and common political and economic interests which make the more easy the task before the two Governments for progress and international justice.

Please accept, M. Minister, the assurance of my very high esteem.

SONNINO.

Dated, Rome, October 24, 1918.

No. 14

Austria-Hungary to the United States.

EXCELLENCY:

By order of my government, I have the honor to beg you to transmit to the President the following communication from the Imperial and Royal Government of Austria-Hungary:

In reply to the note of the President, Mr. Wilson, to the Austro-Hungarian Government, dated October 18th of this year, and about the decision of the President to take up with Austria-Hungary separately, the

question of armistice and peace, the Austro-Hungarian Government has the honor to declare that it adheres both to the previous declarations of the President and his opinion of the rights of the peoples of Austria-Hungary, notably those of the Czecho-slovaks and Jugoslavs, contained in his last note. Austria-Hungary having thereby accepted all the conditions which the President has put upon entering into negotiations on the subject of armistice and peace, nothing, in the opinion of the Austro-Hungarian Government, longer stands in the way of beginning those negotiations. The Austro-Hungarian Government therefore declares itself ready to enter, without waiting for the outcome of other negotiations, into negotiations for a peace between Austria-Hungary and the Entente States, and for an immediate armistice on all fronts of Austria-Hungary, and begs the President, Mr. Wilson, to take the necessary measures to that effect.

Be pleased to accept, Excellency, the assurances of my high consideration.

W. A. F. Ekengren.

His Excellency, Robert Lansing,
Secretary of State of the United States,
Washington, D. C.

Dated, October 29, 1918.

No. 15

Slovak Declaration on October 30, 1919.

The delegates of all the Slovak political parties, assembled on October 30, 1918, at Turčianský Sv.

Martin, and organized into a Slovak National Council as members of the great Czechoslovak nation, affirm the right of self-determination, a right admitted by the entire world. The National Council declares that it alone is authorized to speak and act in the name of the Czechoslovak nation living within the limits of Hungary.

We deny this authority to the Hungarian Government which, for numerous decades, recognized no more serious task than that of oppressing everything Slovak, which neither created nor permitted to be created any school for our people, which never permitted the Slovak people to be admitted to public office, which destroyed the property of our people, and which by its constitution and policy of medieval feudalism, has despoiled us.

We deny equally the right to speak for the Slovak people, in so-called representative assemblies constituted by means of a restricted franchise which does not permit the national will to express itself, and composed of a people who, despite the guarantees of the law, do not permit the use of a single Slovak word in the Councils of purely Slovak counties.

We further deny this right to these popular assemblies whose resolutions are voted under foreign pressure.

Only the Slovak National Council, therefore, is authorized in Slovakia to speak in the name of the Slovak people.

The National Council of the Czechoslovak nation living in Hungary declares:

1. The Slovaks form linguistically and historically

a part of the Czechoslovak nation. The Slovaks have taken part in all the intellectual struggles of the Czech nation, which have made it known throughout the world.

2. We demand also for this Czechoslovak nation the right to self-determination and full independence. In virtue of this principle, we approve the new legal international situation formulated October 18th by President Wilson and recognized October 27th by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Austria-Hungary.

3. We demand the immediate conclusion of peace in conformity to humane and Christian principles, so that, thanks to legal international guarantees, this peace will prevent all new wars and all new armament.

We are convinced that our Slovak people, zealous and well endowed, which, despite unheard of oppression, has long been able to attain to such degree of national culture, will not be excluded from the blessings of peace and of the League of Nations, but that, on the contrary, it will be permitted to collaborate, according to its forces and its means to the general progress of humanity.

Turčiansky Sv. Martin, October 30, 1918.

For the Assembly of the Slovak
National Council:

MATÚŠ DULA,
President;

KAROL A. MEDVECKÝ,
Secretary.

For the Slovak National Council.

No. 16

Declaration of Geneva.

The Czechoslovak deputies and delegates of the National Council of Prague, assembled on October 30, 1918, at Geneva, in the presence of Mr. Edward Beneš, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Provisional Government of the Czechoslovak Countries, declare solemnly in the name of the Czechoslovak nation:

1. Recalling, once more, the great manifestation of the will of the Czechoslovak people of January 6, 1918, and the solemn oath of April 13, 1918, when the Czechoslovak people testified in a clear and precise manner its definite decision to constitute an absolutely sovereign independent State within the historic boundaries of its countries (Bohemia, Moravia and Austrian Silesia, united to Slovakia), we approve entirely the policy and all the military and diplomatic action of the Czechoslovak National Council, transformed into the Provisional Government of the Czechoslovak Countries, now sitting in Paris, as well as all the engagements undertaken by it, in the name of our nation, toward the Allied and Associated States.

We express to it, at the same time, all our gratitude for the great services which it has rendered to the nation.

2. We declare furthermore that the Czechoslovak nation has decided to defend by all its means this program, and that it has definitely broken all ties with Vienna and with Budapest. It will not cease the struggle before having wholly recovered the liberty of its historic countries.

Peace which would not assure the realization of this program would not be durable, for the Czechoslovak nation is unanimous in this case in pursuing the struggle to the very end to deliver itself from the Austro-Hungarian yoke, and all Europe would find itself constantly menaced by the same danger, which brought about the war and present social upheavals.

3. The representatives of the Czechoslovak nation furthermore declare in an absolutely categorical manner that no ties exist or ever will exist between the nation and the dynasty of the Habsburgs.

4. The Peace Conference, which will have to constitute a new political order throughout the entire world, will give occasion for the Czechoslovak nation to aid in constituting in Central Europe, in perfect harmony with Allied and Associated Nations which have so collaborated for the liberation of our people, the political régime which will assure a just and durable peace for all Europe. Our nation will remain forever thankful to all the Allied and Associated States.

Being able for the first time after four years of a terrible war to pass a few moments on the territory of a neutral country and in more direct contact with the states of which the Czechoslovak nation is today the ally, the Czechoslovak deputies and delegates of the National Council of Prague make this solemn decision known to all the Allied countries and to the Government of the United States, invoking the great principle of justice and modern democracy which is the right of peoples to self-determination, and draw

their attention to the absolute necessity of constituting a new political order in Central Europe, to keep the Germans and Magyars henceforth forevermore from the possibility of renewing their old policy which unloosed the present catastrophe upon Europe.

Done at Geneva, October 31, 1918.

KAREL KRAMÁŘ,
G. HABERMAN,
VÁCLAV KLOFÁČ,
FRANT. STANĚK.

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